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Message Text

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46
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 SCCT-01 SY-05 ACDA-07

DHA-02 FBIE-00 USSS-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /081 W
---------- 091268
P R 211604Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8127
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL BELFAST
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
USMISSION USEC BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION OECD PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS EI
SUBJ: ASSASSINATION OF BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN DUBLIN

1. ADDRESSEES SHOULD BE GETTING FULL DETAILS OF THE ASSASSINATION BY NOW FROM THE MEDIA, WHO ARE ARRIVING HERE IN NUMBERS. A CBS/TV CREW HAS JUST ARRIVED.

2. FROM BRITISH EMBASSY, POLICE AND FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES THE FOLLOW-
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ING SEEMS TO BE THE VERIFIED VERSION OF THIS ATROCIOUS EVENT:

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AT ABOUT 9:35 AM JULY 21, THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR, MR. CHRISTOPHER EWART-BIGGS, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS HOUSE-GUEST BRIAN CUBBON, PERMANENT UNDERSECRETARY OF THE (BRITISH) NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE; MISS JUDITH COOK, SECRETARY TO MR CUBBON. THE AMBASSADOR'S NEW CHAUFFEUR, BRIAN O'DRISCOLL WAS AT THE WHEEL. SHORTLY AFTER THE CAR TURNED INTO THE NARROW COUNTRY ROAD OUTSIDE THE RESIDENCE IT WAS BLOWN INTO THE AIR BY A VERY LARGE EXPLOSION WHICH FORMED A LARGE CRATER ABOUT TWELVE FEET DEEP. THE TOP OF THE CAR WAS CRUSHED. FIREMEN, WHO ARRIVED VERY QUICKLY ON THE SCENE, HAD TO USE TORCHES TO CUT THE OCCUPANTS OUT. THEY WERE RUSHED TO THE NEAREST HOSPITAL. AMBASSADOR EWART-BRIGGS AND MISS COOK WERE DEAD UPON ARRIVAL. MR CUBBON IS IN VERY BAD CONDITION WITH A BROKEN BACK AND OTHER INJURIES. THE DRIVER, O'DRISCOLL, HAS A BROKEN ARM BUT APPEARS OTHERWISE ALL RIGHT. THE ACCOMPANYING POLICE VEHICLE HAD SOME OF ITS WINDOWS SMASHED BUT THERE WERE APPARENTLY NO INUURIES IN THAT CAR.

3. THE BOMB WAS APPARENTLY PLANTED IN A CULVERT UNDER THE ROAD, AND WAS DETONATED BY TWO WIRES WHICH WERE FOUND LEADING DOWN FROM A SMALL RIDGE OVERLOOKING THE ROAD. THE POLICE HAVE A FAIR DESCRIPTION OF THREE MEN AND A CAR. TWO OF THE MEN WERE CARRYING RIFLES ACCORDING TO ONE WITNESS.
THE GOI HAS OFFERED A TWENTY THOUSAND POUND REWARD FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST AND CONVICTION OF THE BOMBERS.

4. EVERYONE HERE ASSUMES THAT THIS WAS THE WORK OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA. IN AN INTERVIEW AFTER AN EMERGENCY CABINET MEETING THIS MORNING FOREIGN MINISTER FITZGERALD SAID THAT IT COULD BE ANY ONE OF A NUMBER OF HEINOUS GROUPS OF GUNMEN, LIKE THE PROVISIONAL IRA. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE NO ORGANIZATION HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY.

5. PRIME MINISTER COSGRAVE HAS PROMISED THAT "THE FULL RESOURCES OF THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE USED TO FIND THE PERPETRATORS OF THIS CRIME." THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO ANNOUNCED THERE WILL BE MORE SECURITY MEASURES FOR DIPLOMATS.

COMMENT: THERE IS SOME SPECULATION THAT THIS COULD BE THE START OF A LONG-FEARED IRA "CAMPAIGN" IN THE SOUTH.
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THE EVENT FOLLOWED THE PUBLIC FUNERAL OF AN IRA MEMBER YESTERDAY WHO WAS KILLED IN THE NORTH. IT COULD BE RELATED TO THE JULY 3 HOTEL BOMBS IN DUBLIN, OR IT COULD BE AN ISOLATED INCIDENT. WE CAN BE SURE THAT THE GOI WILL MOUNT A MASSIVE EFFORT TO FIND THE KILLERS, SIMILAR TO THE SUCCESSFUL AND MASSIVE MANHUNT FOR THE KIDNAPPED DUTCH INDUSTRIALIST, DR. HERREMA. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE REACTION WILL BE IN LONDON, BUT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT IS DOING EVERYTHING

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IT CAN TO PREVENT ANY SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEMS WITH THE UK
OVER THIS EVENT. MESSAGES OF CONDOLANCE ARE COMING FROM ALL
QUARTERS, OF COURSE, THE MESSAGE FROM THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR
AMONG THE FIRST.

WE HAVE REVIEWED AND TIGHTENED UP ALL OF OUR SECURITY MEASURES.
OF COURSE ONE UNHAPPY ASPECT OF THIS ASSASSINATION IS THAT
THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR MUST HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE HEAVIEST-GUARDED
DIPLOMATS ANYWHERE. HE WAS ALWAYS ACCOMPANIED BY BODYGUARDS,
HE HAD ESCCORT VEHICLES, HE VARIED HIS TIMES AND ROUTES, HIS
RESIDENCE WAS HEAVILY GUARDED, AND STILL THEY GOT TO HIM WITH A
RATHER SIMPLE DEVICE AND, UP TO NOW, HAVE GOTTEN AWAY.
CURLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ASSASSINATION, TERRORISM, AMBASSADORS, EXPLOSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 JUL 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DUBLIN01430
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760280-0964
From: DUBLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760738/aaaabguw.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <01 APR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASSASSINATION OF BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN DUBLIN
TAGS: PINS, EI, (EWART-BIGGS, CHRISTOPHER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006